



**Inclusion  
Ambassadors**



## **Inclusion Ambassadors**

### **Success Looks Different Awards – Year 2**

Sharing examples of supporting inclusion in schools

**2023**

*“If you don’t do anything about it, inclusion is just a word”*

**May 2024**

## Summary



In 2023, the Inclusion Ambassadors presented a host of new schools and nurseries with Success Looks Different Awards. First launched in 2022, the awards recognise how schools and nurseries support, celebrate, and include pupils with additional support needs.

This document is intended to highlight recurring themes, share observations and celebrate good practice from the winning schools and nurseries and the other applications. We hope this will in turn stimulate conversations within schools and other learning environments about inclusive practice.

## Introduction



The Inclusion Ambassadors are a group of secondary-aged pupils who have additional support needs and attend a range of educational provision across Scotland. They are encouraged to speak freely and openly, sharing their experiences of being a pupil with additional support needs in Scotland.

The Inclusion Ambassadors think about and share what works and what could make things better for pupils with additional support needs in Scotland. They are facilitated by professionals within the children's sector and supported to engage directly with parliamentarians and other decision-makers. Their work is also shared with their peers, schools, and those in positions of influence.

As well as creating and adjudicating the Success Looks Different Awards, the Inclusion Ambassadors also:

- Engage with Scottish Government policy and consultation work, such as the Additional Support for Learning Action Plan
- Create resources for practitioners and decision-makers
- Have a dedicated section on [reach.scot](https://reach.scot), Enquire's website for children and young people all about additional support for learning.



## Vision Statement



In 2021, The Inclusion Ambassadors created a Vision Statement as part of the response to Angela Morgan's Review of the Implementation of Additional Support for Learning. It sets out what they want from schools and the staff who work with them.

*'School should help me be the best I can be.'*

*'School is a place where children and young people learn, socialise and become prepared for life beyond school.'*

*'Success is different for everyone. But it is important that all the adults that children and young people come in to contact with in school get to know them as individuals. They should ask, listen and act on what the young people say about the support that works best for them.school.'*



It was through their work to create this Vision Statement that the Inclusion Ambassadors discussed how best to share their vision across Scotland, and the Success Looks Different Awards were born.

## Success Looks Different Awards 2022



In 2022, the inaugural Success Looks Different Awards took place, with schools from across Scotland submitting applications. The Inclusion Ambassadors selected a winner and a runner up from three categories: primary school, secondary school, and special school.



You can read more about the 2022 awards and the winning schools in last year's report [here](#).

## Success Looks Different Awards 2023



The 2023 Success Looks Different Awards saw the addition of early years settings as a category for applications. We received a well-balanced range of applications from across the four categories.

The Inclusion Ambassadors selected their winners based on how successfully they met the following criteria:

- Evidence of celebrating individual successes and positive relationships
- Evidence of creativity and doing something different
- Evidence of sharing success with the wider community
- Evidence of respecting and promoting children's rights
- Recognition through awards or certificates.

In September 2023, the Inclusion Ambassadors announced their winners and a runner up for each category:

### Early Years

**Winner: Woodlands Nursery Centre, South Lanarkshire**

Runner-up: Wallacetown Early Years Centre, South Ayrshire

### Primary School

**Winner: Williamston Primary School, West Lothian**

Runner-up: Houston Primary School, Renfrewshire

### Secondary School

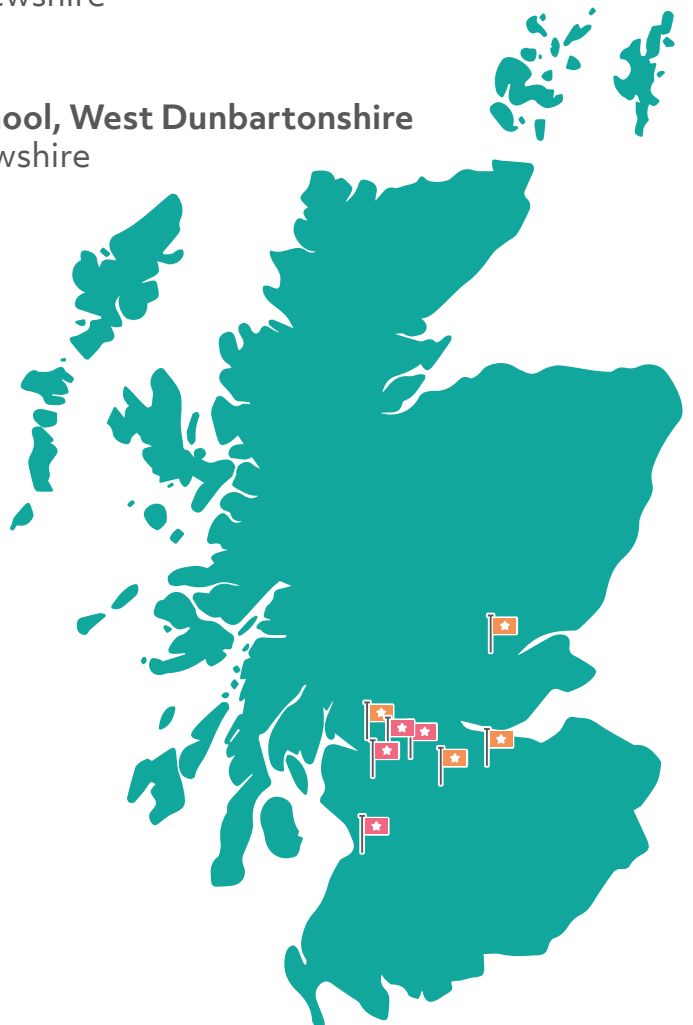
**Winner: Our Lady and St Patrick's High School, West Dunbartonshire**

Runner-up: Park Mains High School, Renfrewshire

### Special School

**Winner: Fairview School, Perth & Kinross**

Runner-up: East Park School, Glasgow City



## Key themes



The entries received in 2023 have continued to engage with and build on similar themes as were evident in the 2022 awards, it is clear these continue to be central pillars of inclusive practice:

- Relationships
- Including pupils in celebrating success
- Creativity and innovation
- Student leaders
- Whole school celebrations
- Focus on the whole learner
- Community connection
- Positive communication
- Meaningful and inclusive awareness raising events.

In this section, we'll examine each of these themes in more detail, sharing examples from across our applications.

### Relationships and recognising success

Good relationships are key, particularly for pupils accessing additional support in school. Understanding pupils and individualising their learning, support, and celebrations can have a huge impact on self-esteem and engagement with the school community.

Our 2023 schools and nurseries achieved this by:

- Creating space and time for staff to build relationships with their pupils, learning about their needs and interests
- Individualised planning which recognises the different goals, capabilities, and learning needs of each pupil
- Building relationships with families and the wider community.

*“School staff ask, listen and act on what our young people say about what they are interested in and what helps them learn.”*

**St Pius X Primary School**

*“The time we spend getting to know our pupils is essential to ensuring that we celebrate the things that are important to them, the things that interest and inspire them and that focus on the skills that they will need in the future to live a fulfilled and happy life.”*

**Fairview School**

*“Some pupils don't have the verbal skills to communicate their needs, so key adults play a vital role in observing body language and facial expression.”*

**Houston Primary School**

## Including pupils in celebrating success

When pupils are given the chance and choice to participate, celebration can feel more meaningful. Listening to children and young people and providing different choices allows all pupils to celebrate their successes in ways that work for them.

Applicants in 2023 achieved this by:

- Offering a range of ways to celebrate success, from whole-school assemblies to individualised postcards sent home
- Creating opportunities for pupil's voices to be heard through pupil-led groups and curriculum choices
- Showcasing the importance of relationships in enabling staff to understand how and what their pupils would like to celebrate.

*"Each child has a learning journal. They play a huge part in deciding which of their many achievements will go in it. All information is proudly shared with parents and carers."*

**Kirkstyle Early Learning Centre**

*"An announcement at the whole school assembly may not be ideal for one individual, whilst it would mean a lot to another."*

**Thistle Wing and Annexe, Kinnaird Primary School**

## Creativity and innovation

Being creative and including the whole school when celebrating different kinds of success was consistent across all of our applications. This demonstrates a commitment to recognising all kinds of achievement.

Schools and nurseries achieved this by:

- Offering a range of different awards and programmes on a variety of different topics, from outdoor learning to digital skills
- Providing pupils with curriculum choices, giving them autonomy to pursue their own interests
- Making use of technology and other resources to provide engaging and creative opportunities.

*We have a number of children who are not ready for the mainstream dinner hall and eat together in a smaller area. We have a display with the visuals and photos of what is for lunch and talking tiles with the names of the lunches recorded on these. Some of our verbal children record these daily. Children look to see what they want, pick the tile, press the button and a voice says what they want for lunch. The look of joy on the children's face when they get what they ask for, first time, is wonderful."*

**St Martin's Primary School**

*We had a recent cohort of S3 and S4 pupils who engaged in a West College Scotland Hair and Beauty course... pupils were disappointed when it ended. The pupils then approached the PT Inclusion Support to ask if they could set up a salon in the school... From a small group of pupils struggling to attend classes, they now have a small business and they have been asked to support hair and make-up in the school show."*

**Park Mains High School**

## Student leaders

The positive impact on pupils when they're given the opportunity to lead and to have their voices heard was clear in many applications. It was also evident that listening to, and acting on, pupil's views helped many schools to create an inclusive whole-school culture.

Examples of this in 2023 included:

- Including pupils in developing school values showed schools' commitment to meaningful inclusion and whole-school pupil participation
- Pupil councils, committees, and groups were utilised to bring about school-wide change and create new opportunities for success
- Meaningful action based on pupil's feedback: buying resources requested, engaging in new projects, listening and recording pupil contributions as part of planning.

*"Our Eco-School Committee has also been very positive for our pupils... in their ambition to achieve the Green Flag, they increased the amount of recycling activity across the school, organised litter picks and planted wildflowers to encourage wildlife."*

**East Park School**

*"It was supported pupils who inspired the introduction of the Young STEM Leader Awards, as they successfully completed the first three modules before encouraging their teacher to roll it out to the whole class... They said?, 'It's good that everyone does STEM stuff now. I can help them.'"*

**St Pius X Primary School**

## Whole school celebrations

Creating a whole-school culture which values and celebrates all kinds of achievements was evident throughout the successful applications. Alongside award celebrations and assemblies, some schools also recognised their pupils' achievements with wall displays, newsletters, and online communications.

Good practice examples in 2023 included approaches such as:

- Investing in a whole-school culture of inclusion through school values, school-wide activities and initiatives, and staff training
- Celebrating awards that recognise pupils who have exemplified their school's values, like kindness, effort, inclusion and community
- Sharing pupil success with the wider community through school-wide newsletters, staff updates, and social media channels.



*"Weekly at assemblies and on Twitter, we celebrate children's hard work and achievements by selecting an example of their work (usually one or two children) from each class across our school and collate it on a video. Children love seeing themselves on the big screen and they also love to see how everyone learns across the school."*

**St Martin's Primary School**

*"We celebrate all achievements with certificates and photos on our pupil participation board at the entrance to our department."*

**Girvan Academy**

## Focus on the whole learner

Considering the needs of every pupil and providing a range of opportunities for success was evident across all applications. Targeted support planning, differentiation, and offering activity and curriculum choices all show a dedication to celebrating learning and growth for all pupils.

Applicants to Year 2 of the awards achieved this by:

- Offering alternative environments within school – sensory spaces, break-out spaces, places for rest and relaxation
- Creating pupil-led focus groups and curriculum choice groups to support pupils to engage with areas of interest or find common ground with their peers
- Training for all staff on topics such as attachment, de-escalation and self-regulation, BSL (British Sign Language) and Makaton, and pupil participation.

*“We recognise that success is different for all our pupils. For some children, it can be about trying new foods at lunchtime, for another it’s about walking away from confrontation on the football pitch. We praise and encourage all pupils to achieve success no matter how small.”*

**Sgoil Bhaile a’Mhanaich**

*“We created a sensory space for children who need space and time to self-regulate... For children to be successful they need to be in a place of feeling safe and secure and this has helped the children learn.”*

**Wallacetown Early Years Centre**

## Community connection

Engaging with families and the wider community encourages inclusion on a wider scale. Across applications it was clear that building relationships and sharing success with families and the wider community facilitated many positive experiences.

Schools and nurseries achieved this by:

- Communicating pupil successes through social media, newsletters, and school online platforms
- Building relationships with families and other agencies to ensure a true ‘team around the child’ approach
- Inviting the community to engage with the school, such as guest speakers, joint projects and learning opportunities with local charities.

*“Children in the nursery led community change such as ‘No dog poo on our shoe’ as children when going on outings were standing on this and wanted it to stop! This campaign got the community more dog waste bins. It even made the papers.”*

**Winter Gardens Nursery**





*“One fantastic way in which our pupils have been involved in celebrating success is through our ASN Base media club who came up with the idea of producing their own newsletter to celebrate different successes within the Base. The pupils plan and design the newsletter as well as create the content which they themselves wish to share with the wider school community and others beyond.*

**Duncanrig Secondary School**

## **Positive communication with parents, carers and families**

Sharing successes with families was evidenced across many applications and showcased the value of building positive relationships in creating a wider culture of inclusion.

Positive examples of this in 2023 included:

- Emails, texts, and postcards sent to parents and carers to celebrate their child's successes, no matter how big or small
- Inviting families to engage with school celebrations, such as assemblies, graduations, and open evenings to showcase children's achievements.

*“We believe it is crucially important for parents to share in pupil success; partly because it breaks down barriers between parents and school, but it provides wraparound acknowledgement of triumphs...”*

**Park Mains High School**

*“At the end of the summer term, every learner is presented with a certificate of achievement, which highlights a special success from the past year – families attend and enjoy a BBQ or buffet after the event, so that we can all share our achievements together.”*

**East Park School**

## **Meaningful and inclusive awareness raising events**

Giving all pupils the time and space to learn about additional support needs can lead to a more inclusive learning environment for all.

We heard how schools and nurseries achieved this by:

- Whole-school engagement with events such as Autism Acceptance Week and Dyslexia Awareness Week
- Pupil-led focus groups on issues such as children's rights and neurodiversity, whose ideas and feedback are used to support activities and school-wide initiatives.

*“We soon had 30 pupils on board [in our Neurodiversity Squad] and were faced with our first event – Dyslexia Awareness Week. Pupils... set their classes a challenge such as creating dyslexia awareness posters, researching famous dyslexic learners from the past and present and learning more about dyslexia together as a class and what small changes might help others.”*

**Williamston Primary School**

*“Our pupil council members help to organise events and competitions about matters that are important to them and their classmates.”*

**Fairview School**

## The 2023 winners



Find out more about our 2023 Success Looks Different Awards winner here and get inspiration for developing inclusive approaches.



### Early Years: Woodlands Nursery Centre, South Lanarkshire



Woodlands Nursery Centre support their children to 'Make a Memory Everyday'. The Inclusion Ambassadors were impressed that the nursery's children's council allows children at Woodlands to express their views, needs and interests.

#### Woodlands Nursery Centre are our winners because:

- Children's voices are heard through their children's council and their encouragement of child-initiated play
- They demonstrated their commitment to differentiation; tailoring their learning to support the individual needs of children
- Communication with families is a priority; keeping in touch through an online learning journal where families and staff celebrate successes that happen in and outside of nursery
- Their creative 'drive by' graduation ceremonies, where children take part with their families, choose their own music, and can celebrate in whatever way works best for them.



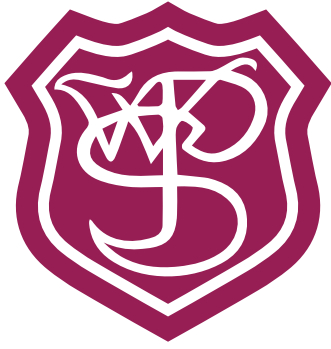
Staff and children at Woodlands Nursery Centre receiving their Success Looks Different Award



***"Within Woodlands we believe it is of the utmost importance to celebrate even the littlest achievement and create a seamless link between home and nursery."***

***"The drive by graduation allows for the children to feel safe and secure in an environment surrounded by people they know rather than sitting on a stage for long periods of time."***

Woodlands Nursery Centre



## Primary School: Williamston Primary School, West Lothian



Williamston Primary School have been working particularly to recognise neurodiversity. The inclusion Ambassadors loved how they engaged with their local community, inviting guests to speak at the school about different topics.

Williamston Primary School are our winners because:

- The Neurodiversity Squad of pupils from across the school informs school practice and plans new ways to celebrate difference
- Their commitment to school-wide celebrations of diversity, such as Dyslexia Awareness Week
- They connect with their local community by inviting in speakers, such as a teacher who is dyslexic and an autistic young person who set up their own local charity
- They included lots of feedback and quotes from children, teachers, and parents in their application, which showcased the impact of their work.



Staff and pupils at Williamston Primary School receiving their Success Looks Different Award



*"We [also] had an autistic parent come in to school to share how she overcame challenges to live and work in Japan... The pupils loved to hear about how her amazing neurodivergent brain allowed her to learn 7 different languages and gave her a passion for helping others."*

One child at the school said, *"People with autism or ADHD or dyslexia can understand themselves better now and that makes them happier."*

A teacher said, *"Teachers are more confident with supporting pupils and discussing supports with parents. I would say this came from pupils being more confident about discussing their own needs and having the vocabulary to do so."*

Williamston Primary School



## Secondary school: Our Lady and St Patrick's High School, West Dunbartonshire



The Inclusion Ambassadors were impressed by Our Lady and St Patrick's High School's creativity and their focus on children's rights.

### Our Lady and St Patrick's High School are our winners because:

- They offer a range of learning awards and opportunities, like the John Muir Award, Blue Peter badge scheme, and the Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award (iDEA)
- They showcased creative ways to support learning, such as the Craft Club, and 'therapets' where pupils practice reading with Skye, a Golden Shepherd dog
- They offer support to pupils with particular needs; the nurture room offers a safe space away from larger classes, they have a programme that supports interrupted learners to return to school, and an outdoor adventure trip for S2 pupils as part of their equity agenda (at no financial cost to families)
- They included lots of feedback and quotes from children, teachers, and parents in their application, which showcased the impact of their work.



Staff and pupils at Our Lady & St Patrick's High School receiving their Success Looks Different Award



*"[These awards] unlock new opportunities and, ultimately, [pupils] gain industry-recognised awards that help them stand out from the crowd."*

Speaking about 'therapets', one pupil said, *"It's my favourite time in school."*

*"All we ask is that the pupils enjoy and have fun!"*

Our Lady and St Patrick's High School



## Special school: Fairview School, Perth



The Inclusion Ambassadors were impressed by Fairview School's commitment to getting to know their pupils and the importance that they place on relationships.

### Fairview School are our winners because:

- They recognise the importance of relationships; for example, by starting each school year with a 'Connect with Me' topic that helps staff get to know their pupils so that they can build curriculums that are meaningful to them
- Their Pupil Council and pupil Choice Groups allow pupils to share their views about their learning and take part in opportunities that interest them
- Success is celebrated through Star Awards presented at weekly Get Togethers, and shared with the community through social media and by photos, videos and certificates sent to families.



*"Relationships are central to everything that we do at Fairview."*

*"We want our young people to feel empowered to shape their experiences at school and beyond."*

Fairview School



Staff and pupils at Fairview School receiving their Success Looks Different Award

Thank you to everyone who applied this year. It was clear across all the applications that there are many ways to celebrate the successes of all pupils!



## Want to find out more?



We hope to run the Success Looks Different Awards again in 2023-24. Until more details are announced, there are a number of Inclusion Ambassador resources that can support your practice:

- Explore the resources for professionals created by the Inclusion Ambassadors on the Children in Scotland website:  
[childreninscotland.org.uk/inclusion-ambassadors](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/inclusion-ambassadors)
- Hear directly from the Inclusion Ambassadors and find out about their most recent work on reach.scot, Enquire's website for children and young people all about additional support for learning:  
[reach.scot/inclusion-ambassadors](https://reach.scot/inclusion-ambassadors)
- Keep up to date by following us on social media:  
[@ChildreninScot](https://twitter.com/ChildreninScot) | [@EnquireReachASL](https://twitter.com/EnquireReachASL)
- Get in touch with the team to find out more:



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